



The State of New Hampshire  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner  
March 12, 2007

The Honorable Judith Spang, Chairman  
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 305  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**Re: HB 459, relative to the identification of wells**

Dear Chairman Spang:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 459, which proposes to improve the methods that New Hampshire utilizes to identify and maintain records of wells. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill.

HB 459 is a result of the work of the Commission to Study Issues Relative to Groundwater Withdrawals. The Commission, with membership from a broad cross-section of stakeholders including DES, was established by Senate Bill 155 of the 2003 legislative session to assess how New Hampshire can improve management of groundwater resources. One conclusion was that the state should improve its record-keeping pertaining to the identification of wells. Specifically, the Commission found that it was important for the members of the public to be able to match DES records of wells with wells on their properties.

HB 459, as introduced, proposes to require that well identification tags be affixed to all new wells that are installed in the state. This would provide a unique identification number on the well tag for entry on well completion reports already submitted to the state.

Since HB 459 was originally drafted, a diverse group, including DES, Legislators, Groundwater Commission members, the New Hampshire Water Well Association and independent well drillers, has worked to develop an alternative approach that does not require that a tag be physically attached to each well drilled. These discussions have resulted in the development of a proposal that requires well drillers to utilize global positioning system technology to determine the longitude and latitude of a well, and the tax map, lot number, and street address for the property where the well is located. We understand that an amendment may be offered that proposes this alternative, which we also support.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this bill. Please feel free to call me at 271-2958, or Sarah Pillsbury at 271-1168, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

*Michael Wells, Ass't. Comm.*  
Thomas S. Burack  
Commissioner

cc: Representatives Fargo and Beaulieu,  
Senator Cilley and Fuller Clark